



Oh, that explains it



Michigan Merit Curriculum High School Graduation Requirements

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COURSE/CREDIT CONTENT GUIDELINES

The Michigan Department of Education has developed and the State Board of Education has approved *High School Content Expectations (HSCE)* that outline what students should know and be able to do in English language arts, mathematics and science. Content Expectations for social studies are currently in the development process. These expectations serve as the foundation for the development of more specific Course/Credit Content Expectations that outline what students should know and be able to do for each credit required in the Michigan Merit Curriculum.

The Michigan Merit Curriculum Course/Credit Content Expectations and Guidelines will assist school districts and teachers to align their current curriculum, guide what is taught and assessed to earn credit, and provide parents with a tool to gauge student progress. These expectations also will serve as the basis to develop various questions included in the Michigan Merit Exam.

In the future, the Michigan Department of Education will be developing a variety of companion documents to support the implementation of these credits.

ONLINE COURSE OR LEARNING EXPERIENCE

What the Michigan Merit Curriculum Law Says

Sec. 1278a(1)(b) A school district or public school academy shall provide the basic level of technology and internet access required by the state board to complete the online course or learning experience. For a pupil to meet this requirement, the pupil shall meet either of the following, as determined by the school district or public school academy:

Has successfully completed at least 1 course or learning experience that is presented online, as defined by the Michigan Department of Education.

The pupil's school district or public school academy has integrated an online experience throughout the high school curriculum by ensuring that each teacher of each course that provides the required credits of the Michigan merit curriculum has integrated an online experience into the course.

What Research Says

Thirty-eight million fulltime workers in the nation have Internet access at their jobs and two-thirds of them (67%) go online at least once per day. Seventy-two percent of full-time workers with Internet access at work say it has improved their ability to do their jobs.

Questions & Answers

I. Q: Why has an online learning experience been added to the Michigan Merit Curriculum?

A: Today, technology plays an integral role in school, at home and in the workplace. Completing a meaningful online learning experience in grades 9-12 will allow students to become familiar with the key means of increasing their own learning skills and knowledge. It also will prepare them for the demands they will encounter in higher education, the workplace, and personal lifelong learning.

Already, many universities and colleges require students to have a laptop with them when they arrive on campus. Businesses conduct training sessions online, and cities now are providing wireless Internet access in businesses to attract customers to their establishments. To give our students an experience of learning in a virtual world, the online learning experience is included in the Michigan Merit Curriculum requirements.

2. Q: What counts for the online learning requirement?

A: The Michigan Department of Education has developed Online Learning Guidelines that were approved by the State Board in October 2006. You can access these guidelines at www.michigan.gov/highschool.

3. Q: Will the online learning experience cost money? Who is going to pay for this?

A: The Michigan Merit Curriculum requires an online learning experience, which can be met in a variety of ways at no cost and does not necessarily have to be met through an online course. A free online course called *Career Forward* has been developed by the Michigan Department of Education and the Michigan Virtual University (MVU) with funding from the Microsoft Corporation. For more information visit the [Career Forward](#) website at MVU.

4. Q: Can the online learning requirement be met prior to 9th grade?

A: Yes, the requirement may be satisfied by an online experience at the middle school level, but students are encouraged to continue with online learning throughout high school.

5. Q: Does the online learning experience need to go on a transcript?

A: While districts will need to assure students complete this requirement, the law does not mandate that a student be given credit for this experience. If a credit is not awarded, the online learning experience does not need to be on the transcript. However, a district would need to keep a record of students meeting this requirement. If the district offers students the ability to earn credit for an online learning class or experience, the credit should appear on the transcript.

6. Q: If a student is taking a high school class via distance learning, does this fulfill the requirement of an online course or learning experience?

A: Yes, if the class meets the guidelines. Distance learning does not automatically qualify. The distance learning experience must meet the guidelines.

7. Q: Does an online course or online learning experience need to be teacher led or can it be self-paced?

A: It depends. If the online course or online learning experience is being used to earn credit for graduation, it must be teacher led. However, students can participate in online courses and online learning experiences without a teacher if credit is not being granted.